

# *The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review*



ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL

THE BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER CELEBRATES THE  
FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF ITS DISTINGUISHED RABBI

# Fashion Leaders



MINK  
CARACUL  
PERSIAN  
ERMINE  
FOX

**SOLOMON SCHWARTZ & SON, Inc.**

MANUFACTURING FURRIERS

330 SEVENTH AVENUE

NEW YORK

FURRIERS SINCE 1883

# BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER REVIEW

Vol. XIX

FEBRUARY, 1938 — ADAR I. 5698

No. 25

## Dr. Israel Herbert Levinthal— An Honored Name, A Useful Life

**A** MOST eager and affectionate welcome awaits Dr. Levinthal on his fiftieth birthday which will be ushered in by a festival at the Brooklyn Jewish Center, sponsored by the entire membership.

In a most grateful and respectful vein they will shower him with exuberant adoration and honor. Everything that has breath in the Center will praise him—with word, with song, with dance.

This dramatic representation of joy is an echo of a real, vibrant voice. It is the glowing flush on the cheek which bespeaks the warm, rich blood on the inside. It is the emotional response of the inward feelings of reverence and recognition to Jewish truth and learning organized in his personality. It is the answering heart speaking approvingly to the heart that first spoke. Indeed, it symbolizes more than merely love and warmth for a leader. It betokens hunger for the quality of a hero who is playing a truly leading Jewish part in Jewish national, religious and cultural life. It is the sincere response of worshippers to the cry for the more abundant Jewish life.

Those who know Dr. Levinthal, we are sure, will not suspect us of undue partiality towards him when we say that the reasons are manifold for such unfeigned and unexaggerated tributes of honor and reverence. The Center knows him well. Its members had every opportunity of observing his character, his qualities and his ability. They know how he thinks and lives, carries himself and talks. He has been with them uninterruptedly for nineteen fruitful years, continually filling a larger and richer space in their lives and conduct.

Singularly pleasing in appearance and manners, he is an unassuming and ingenuous person. He has an amiable disposition and charming, companionable qualities uniting dignity

and meekness in attractive proportions. For nineteen friendly years he gave of his heart and mind to his congregants, sang to them of their hopes and emotions, touched their souls closely and kindled in them affection and veneration. He has enriched their minds and gladdened their lives, helped soften and dignify their struggle for human existence.

There is an utter absence of pretension in this preacher; no affected fervor; no assumed enthusiasm or theatrical show. He makes no attempt to lubricate his way into the heart of his audience through professional "holy tone," pedantic niceness of language, ranting declarations or glittering rhetoric. There is an intense and impassioned earnestness about him. His calm, tranquil eye can flash fire. With penetrating emphasis he tells "Jacob his transgression." He inveighs sharply against the religion that is irreligious; against the assumed piety of impiety; against the charlatanism of wealth or poverty.

This man has achieved and retained unusual popularity as a preacher. Ever since 1919 thousands—of every rank and character—came week after week to his Saturday preaching and Friday evening lectures. Literally, his career in the Brooklyn Jewish Center since he first came to it has been one continuous ovation—one of steadily increasing fame and favor.

What accounts for his hold upon his audiences? What gives his sermons so great an interest? In what lies his magnetism? Apart from his natural gifts, what is the source of his powers as a preacher?

The main source of his powers lies in his moral, intellectual and emotional enthusiasm for the cultural and spiritual products of the Jewish national fiber and consciousness through the ages.

We possess a unique and character-

istic individuality to which we have given expression in a literature of our own. This indigenous Jewish culture is to Dr. Levinthal the "glorious immortality of true greatness," the ever-living part of our nature enshrining our Truth for all time. It combines truth and beauty, giving Jews the highest quality and quantity of pleasure and intellectual satisfaction. It contains specimens of all that is excellent and furnishes a harmonious and practical system for Jewish life.

Dr. Levinthal views our literature as absolutely necessary for our existence as a people and the surest foundation upon which to build our future. The Jewish creative genius, he firmly believes, still lives and is capable of expressing itself anew. The main, and perhaps only, hope for the perpetuation of our Jewish productive genius lies in the utilization of our original cultural and spiritual creations.

To preserve, develop and spread the Jewish genius he has consecrated every gift to him in perpetual aspiration and unceasing toil.

The key to the characteristic quality of his preaching may be found in the favorite phrases of his which he constantly uses. There is still a deeper truth; a hidden meaning in the text. Like all Jewish authorities he is not satisfied with the mere understanding of the words. He insists on Drash—on the explanation of the inner sense of the words. The Bible has a double sense; an inner and an outer sense. The inner sense embodies the highest form of truth.

Maimonides says:

"Their (the Biblical passages) outer meaning is suggestive of wisdom, useful in many directions . . . Their inner meaning, however, contains wisdom leading to the profoundest religious beliefs in their very essence."

Thus he constantly searches for the inner sense like the physician who looks for the inner or real life in the heart.

Dr. Levinthal has incorrectly been termed by some a Darshan. He is not interested merely to expound scrip-  
(Continued on next page)

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review is published monthly by the Brooklyn Jewish Center at 667 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, N. Y. Manuscripts should be sent to this address and will be carefully considered by the editors. Subscription \$1.00 per year.

Joseph M. Schwartz, President

Henry Seinfeld and Hyman Aaron, Vice Presidents;

Moses Ginsberg, Treas.

Max Herzfeld, Secy.

Israel H. Levinthal, J.D., L.H.D., Rabbi

Joseph Goldberg, Administrative Director

tural passages didactically or homiletically, to explain obscure texts, to spring surprises, to exhibit his learning to the wonder of others, to gratify a taste for beauty and style. He regards such endeavors as preaching in the wilderness, condemns it as pseudo-spirituality. He seeks to spread, in the light of the Hebraism of the prophets, the continuity and development of the national Hebrew spirit, and the Judaism of the Rabbis. His aim is to communicate the Jewish treasury of moral beauty and grandeur in order to realize in life the Hebrew ideal of character and conduct.

Dr. Levinthal is not an exegete of the outer meaning of the Bible. He is an exegete of the inner meaning of Jewish life. He seeks to reach the deeper truth in order to develop the profounder being. His preaching embodies two parallel currents of activity:

1. The discovery of the hidden meaning of Hebrew lore, thereby uncovering the historic life of the Jewish people of old.

2. The sound development and advancement of the historical evolution of the inner life of the Jew in our age and time.

To reach the deeper truth, the profounder being, to see the unseen, to bring truth nearer to reality, a suitable medium of expression is necessary. Abstract ideas, abstract vocabularies are inadequate. Symbols, verbal images are required. Thoughts and emotions must be described in pictures. Hence, like the prophets and poets he employs similes, analogies, parables, fables and legends.

"Son of man, put forth a simile and speak a parable." (Ezra 17:2.)

"I have spoken in similes by the prophets." (Hosea 12-10.)

His fine mastery of the Haggadah, Talmudic, Midrashic, Rabbinic literature supplies him with abundant materials of this nature. In them he finds his satisfaction and inspiration and through them he speaks his own thoughts and feelings. Artist and artisan that he is, he collects them and

with creative power interprets them—and in interpreting them interprets the modern world. With an artist's sensibilities to spiritual realities, with a poetical, intuitive mind, with an exquisite touch and felicitous selection of illustration, he produces scenes and pictures accordant with and satisfying to contemporary thought and culture.

This method of preaching he pursues not only in his pulpit but everywhere else. The unwearied and inventive energy and love for Hebrew culture are always present with him. He brings the hues and the odors of the Midrash into the dry business of life, into the commonplace, matter-of-fact things, making the moral and religious element as strongly marked there as in the Sabbath preaching.

What are his specific contributions? His life is a fine interpretation of the sayings of the Jewish Fathers: "Turn it, and turn it again, for the all is therein and thy all is therein."

He has given fresh proof of the importance of understanding the admonition of Solomon that the object of his book was "To understand a simile and figurative speech, the words of the wise and their dark sayings."

He has shown that there is a helpful, harmonic relation between the old Jewish learning and modern culture. He has animated neglected truths with new vigor; impregnated current ideas with a mellowed Jewish heritage. Like a diver, he has recovered priceless treasures that were hidden in the deep, forgotten Jewish names and ideas and brought them upon the modern stage and refurbished them with a new luster.

He has supplied the library of sermonic literature with two volumes, upon which, among many others, Dr. Cyrus Adler, Dr. Bernard Revel, Dr. Judah L. Magnes and a score of newspaper critics have pronounced unusually high encomiums. A sentence from an appreciate study of Dr. Levinthal's works by Dr. Walter C. Whitaker is happily descriptive: "Scarcely a page is without a quotation from the Talmud or Midrash . . . if this volume is a sample of what rabbis can produce, we shall want many more volumes of Jewish sermons." Pleasant and readable, they are written in a simple, natural style and will be among those that will survive despite the very high mortality of sermonic books.

Unlike other preachers he does not borrow to enrich or adorn his theme; all he says or does is in an effort to show the richness and beauty of what

## DAVID YELLIN GREET'S DR. LEVINTHAL

(The following cable was received as the REVIEW went to press):

**H**EARTY congratulations to Rabbi Israel H. Levinthal, the faithful shepherd of his congregation and the distinguished Zionist, on the occasion of his fiftieth anniversary. May he enjoy long life and happiness and fruitful labor.

In the name of the Hebrew Teachers Seminary of Jerusalem.

DAVID YELLIN

the rabbis have already said. Every page is suggestive and instructive and is destined to have an extensive influence upon the training of future preachers.

His advocacy that Jewish life like physical life must be developed from the inside has wrought a general change in the method of preaching. Through his remarkable success in the ministry, other Jewish preachers are commencing to follow his beliefs and adopt his technique. "The historic sense of communion with his people's past" is now receiving more than the cursory attention it generally received.

Members of the Brooklyn Jewish Center — indeed, Jewry in general — have good cause to rejoice. They are the happy *mechutanim* to Dr. Levinthal's union with the ministry which, beginning thirty years ago, has proved so glorious and beneficent to Jewish life. They may also rejoice that even as they have prospered under his benign influence, so "He did it with all his heart, and prospered." (2 Chronicles 31:21.)

In the fulfillment of Dr. Levinthal's noble aims so inspiring, so devoted and so helpful, has been his wife—who during a happy wedlock antedating his entrance into the ministry, has also consecrated her life to his life's work—that it may more appropriately be said, "They did it with all their hearts and prospered."

—LOUIS J. GRIBETZ

### Members of the Editorial Board of the Review

Louis J. Gribetz, Chairman

Joseph Goldberg

Joseph Kaye

Dr. Israel H. Levinthal

Lester Lyons

William I. Siegel

**B**ECAUSE this issue of the REVIEW is devoted to the Brooklyn Jewish Center's celebration of Dr. Levinthal's fiftieth birthday all the regular REVIEW material, including Lester Lyon's monthly feature, "Jewish Events Reviewed," has been omitted.

# THE MAKING OF A RABBI

By JOSEPH KAYE

**A**S gratifying as to look on a perfect work of art is it to see a man who is perfectly wedded to his work, who is completely happy in what he is doing and through his happiness and pure satisfaction is able to bring happiness to others.

Rabbi Israel H. Levinthal is such a man.

Once before I met one of his type, though he was of a totally different calibre. He was the late Darwin H. Kingsley, President of the New York Life Insurance Company. Kingsley, an unusually cultured man, believed devoutly in life insurance. To him life insurance was not a business but a philosophy. Inducted into life insurance while still a young man he saw it develop from a troublesome infancy to strong maturity, and the more important and widely recognized it became the more did he accept this growth as confirmation of his faith in it.

As a business executive Kingsley was an inspiration. And he was an inspiration mainly because of his extraordinary devotion to the cause of life insurance.

Dr. Levinthal's faith in his calling too, is sublime. He has a beautiful faith in his God and an ardent love for his people. Therefore he is able to serve both with such distinction; therefore he is an inspiration to those with whom he comes in contact. He would be a still more potent inspiration if those who knew him would understand the composition of his power, if they could realize how they themselves could be made happier by uniting their lives to a purpose with which they could be thoroughly in harmony.

Rabbi Levinthal found himself quite early in life. It could be said that it was natural for him to take to the rabbinate. He came of a long line of rabbis, and his own father was a rabbi. But it was through his own impulses that he began to study theology. His father saw such economic hardship for the rabbinate of his time that he would have been better pleased had his son adopted law as a profession. But young Israel could not dream of the law, whereas he could dream of the pulpit.

Two men outside his home influenced him greatly in those days in Philadelphia, Dr. Marcus Jastrow and

Dr. Solomon S. Cohen. Once the elder Levinthal sent his son with an *esrig* and *lulav* to Dr. Jastrow, and Israel was fascinated with this scholar's study. It was a room of spiritual serenity, where the mind could soar, and the books that lined the walls were like windows opening into a fragrant garden.

Dr. Cohen is one of the foremost diagnosticians in the city, and a Hebrew scholar and poet as well. He is a Portuguese Jew of a picturesque appearance and manner. His head is

big and imposing, his hair curly, his eyes deep and penetrating. Dr. Levinthal, at that time about fifteen, was not strong, and Dr. Cohen frequently examined him. Later he made a practice of asking the boy to come to him every Sunday. These interviews resolved themselves into talks on Jewishness, and Dr. Cohen took special pains to lead his patient to books that would make him a better Jew.

As he grew older Dr. Levinthal be-

(Continued on next page)



*An early portrait of Dr. and Mrs. Levinthal and their children, Helen Hadassah and Lazar.*

came definitely convinced that the rabbinic was his goal. In the meantime the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York had been reorganized and revitalized by the importation from England of Solomon Schechter. This change had been accomplished through the work of Dr. Cohen and a few other men. With Dr. Schechter came a number of scholars of his choosing, and Dr. Levinthal felt an irresistible urge towards this now new institution.

At the age of eighteen he finally realized his wish and entered the Seminary. At the same time, through special permission, he was permitted to study at Columbia University.

As though all circumstances were unified to direct him to the goal he had set for himself, he came under the influence at the Seminary of Joseph Mayer Ascher, a follower of the Viennese Chief Rabbi, Adolph Jelenek. Jelenek had become famed as a preacher because of his use of old classic rabbinic material. He was actually the first rabbi in Europe to popularize this style of sermonizing. Ascher tried to instill the principles of Jelenek's style into his pupils, and his teaching was particularly welcomed by young Levinthal, who felt himself instinctively drawn towards it.

Ascher's appearance helped to impress his teachings on his pupil. He was, as his friends expressed it,

the nearest approach to an artist's conception of a prophet. He was slight, his complexion was Oriental, his eyes were dreamy and he had a silky little beard. He was an ardent spirit, and eventually spent himself on preaching. Strangely enough, while a student at Cambridge University (Schechter brought him also from England) Ascher was a member of the boat crew.

Notwithstanding his dual courses Levinthal was a brilliant student at both institutions and managed to win the silver medal for oratory at Columbia. In the same contest the gold medal was won by a Chinese youth who later became a noted diplomat, Dr. Wellington Koo.

While he was still a student Dr. Levinthal married his childhood sweetheart, May Bogdanoff.

Their romance began when both, as youngsters, ran to the same synagogue to see the Simchas Torah festivities. May's family came from Odessa, Russia, a city not noted for the devoutness of its Jews, and the Bogdanoffs were quite sophisticated. But, so destiny had ordered, May felt a natural sympathy with Jewishness, and was stirred by the Jewish ceremonials.

The families of both children were acquainted, and so the children saw each other frequently until, at high school, their friendship became deep. They always arranged to meet on the same trolley going to school and com-



*Dr. Levinthal and Mrs. Levinthal at about the time of their marriage.*

ing home. By the time they graduated high school it was taken for granted by the Levinthals and the Bogdanoffs that a marriage would unite them.

The wedding was a private one in Philadelphia and then the couple returned to New York and set up house-keeping in a four-room apartment on West 122nd Street. They had to climb four flights of stairs to reach it, but they only paid about twenty-four dollars a month and the rooms were comfortable.

Living expenses were made by weekend preaching at a synagogue in Greenpoint, and the married life of the couple began in a glow of happiness. Their home was the gathering place for all the students, since Dr. Levinthal was one of the only two married men among them — which meant that he could entertain.

Here their first child was born, and here he received his first call from a synagogue for a full-time rabbinate. The synagogue was the Bnai Sholom in South Brooklyn.

Dr. Levinthal was one of the youngest rabbis in the city. So young that during the installation — attended by Professor Israel Friedlander and Dr. Masliansky — one of the members said to the elder Levinthal in Yiddish: "Your son has made a very fine impression — but he is so youthful!"

"Never mind," replied the older rabbi, glancing around at the congregation. "I think he will age very soon here."

The father's words were somewhat prophetic. Soon after the synagogue property was sold to theatrical interests and the congregation became ambitious. They built a much larger structure than the small community of the neighborhood could support, and on young Dr. Levinthal fell the principal burden of seeing that the venture did not fail.

For five years he remained with this congregation, and the years were filled



*Laying the corner stone of the Center building.*

*Dr. Levinthal, Rabbi S. Finkelstein and Rabbi B. L. Levinthal*

with hard work and responsibility. At the beginning of this period he had undertaken to study law in order to fit himself to write a thesis for a doctor's degree. The subject he had chosen was the Jewish law of agency, a subject about which little had been written. He had intended merely to gather material through research but he found legal study so interesting that he determined to take a regular law course.

He actually finished this course and was admitted to the bar, though he did not write his thesis until some years later.

Once a full-fledged lawyer he was tempted to make use of this new profession. His experience with the synagogue he served had left him rather disappointed. He did not find in the community the full support he had expected, and for the first time the enthusiasm for the rabbinate which had been so strongly his since boyhood began to wane a little. Perhaps he recalled his father's first inclination to make him a lawyer. At any rate, he divided his time between the pulpit and the law, and entered the office of one of the members of his congregation.

His first case, an insurance claim, set for trial before Justice Isaac Kapper, was settled out of court in favor of his client. This victory encouraged him and he devoted himself to the business of the office with zeal.

He was a practicing lawyer for eight months, and he made much more money than as a rabbi. But he was not happy. The money he earned seemed alien money and the surroundings he found himself in were alien surroundings. In the pulpit, in his study preparing his sermon, he was at home, and warmed as though by the family fireside. Quickly he became convinced that this was not his work. This period could be considered only as one of test, and now his dedication to God and his people was made free of all doubting.

After he had reached this decision, and as a fitting sequence, he received a call from the Temple Petach Tikvah, also a new building, and the only synagogue serving the English-speaking community in Brownsville.

Here there were also difficulties and the hard work incidental to building up a new synagogue, but here also Dr. Levinthal began to come into his own as a preacher. His Friday night services were so famed that literally thousands came to hear him. Rabbis of reputation in the city were astounded



*Dr. Levinthal and Mrs. Levinthal and Dr. Levinthal's parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Bernard L. Levinthal.*

at the phenomenon of this young man of twenty-seven drawing such crowds, and attended his services to be convinced. He was continually in demand

for lecturing, and often he had to speak several times during one evening.

After almost five years with Petach Tikvah a group of twenty-five outstanding members of the congregation felt the need for a larger Jewish institution, one that would have the facilities for much broader service to the Jewish community. This group organized what is now the Brooklyn Jewish Center and asked Rabbi Levinthal to come with them. He was eager for this new opportunity, and thus he entered the work which has so happily dominated his life.

During the time it took to build the Center Rabbi Levinthal had some leisure and he now wrote his thesis that obtained his doctor's degree. The thesis was published by the Jewish Theological Seminary under the title "The Jewish Law of Agency, with Special reference to the Roman and Common  
(Continued on page 22)

## Dr. Levinthal's First Sermon Delivered At The Age of 13

*(Following is a condensation of an address made by Rabbi Levinthal at a memorial meeting held on May 11, 1902, at the Kesher Israel Synagogue in Philadelphia. The occasion was a service mourning the loss of two eminent Jews of that time, the Rev. Dr. Solomon Mandelkern and Rev. A. S. Friedburg. This is Rabbi Levinthal's first sermon, and it made such an impression that it was reprinted in a booklet. Although delivered at the age of thirteen, and though it displays an admiration for the deceased men that may be considered overly enthusiastic, it indicates plainly the style of the future master of homiletics. The gathering was held under the auspices of the "Aids of Zion," a Zionist club organized — or "instigated," as the booklet has it—by young Israel Levinthal—EDITOR.)*

**L**ADIES and gentlemen: We have assembled here this evening to perpetuate the sacred memories of those two men to whom it is our duty to pay reverence.

In fact, it seems strange that there should be any need of commemorating such men as the Rev. Solomon Mandelkern and Rev. A. S. Friedburg, whose names will be written in never-fading letters on the pages of history. The greatest monuments that can be erected to these imperishable dead are

the numberless books of exquisite learning which they have written: monuments which in fact are much higher and of greater fame than the pyramids, or even the Eifel Tower could be . . .

I have recently seen an expression used by my grandfather, the departed Rabbi Eliezer Kleinberg, blessed be his memory, in a sermon on the deceased Rabbi Samuel Strashun. It is an old Talmudical saying that when the word "remember" is mentioned we take it for granted that it applies to something which may be forgotten. Now in this case, where there is not even the slightest chance that the names of such immortal men could be forgotten, there is certainly no need of our doing anything to prolong their memories.

However, ladies and gentlemen, the purpose of this meeting is not to mourn the deceased, who are alive this day spiritually; neither have we assembled to strew flowers over their graves, which is also useless, as their delightful odor and pleasant sensation is but momental and they droop and are forgotten like all bodily matters. Nor yet have we assembled to start a fund for the deceased, which, as I said, is not necessary. Moreover, it is not the nature of the Jewish peo-

*(Continued on page 19)*

# DR. LEVINTHAL AS I KNOW HIM

By JOSEPH GOLDBERG

THE columns of this issue of the *Review* bear testimony to the place of honor which Rabbi Levinthal occupies in Jewish life in this country. Leaders in all walks of life have admired him for what he is, a great spiritual leader of a large congregation, a scholar of note, a preacher par excellence, a teacher of religion and a leader in Israel.

It is not my purpose to deal with these phases of Dr. Levinthal's greatness. I shall limit myself to impressions of Rabbi Levinthal as gathered from day to day contact over a period of almost nineteen years.

My mind reverts to those unforgettable days in November 1919 when both of us linked our fortunes to what was then but a dream,—the institution that came to be known as the Brooklyn Jewish Center. Dr. Levinthal had just resigned his position of rabbi of a nearby temple and had answered the call to become the spiritual leader of the newly organized institution. We spent hours discussing plans for the Center which was about to be erected. Committees were active in planning the physical structure. He was concerned primarily with the spiritual side of the building. He had been active for a number of years ministering to several congregations in the Borough, but felt the limitations of the average Synagogue or Temple. He had visions of a new institution which was to serve Jewry day in and day out, by spreading Jewish knowledge and religion among the young and old of the community.

From that time on we were in almost daily contact, except for brief separations during his trips away from the city. The more intimately I have come to know him the more I have learned to love and admire him. His benign countenance somehow makes you feel at ease, and, yet you sense that you are in the presence of a great soul and a person deserving of reverence.

The late Dr. Cadman used to call him: "my friend Rabbi Levinthal, *the Saint*." I know of no better description. It is characteristic of Dr. Cadman's keen sense of judgment of men that, although a casual visitor at the Center, he was able to express in one word the outstanding feature of Dr. Levinthal's personality. It is also significant that those who come in close

contact with the Rabbi are always impressed by his saintliness and godliness.

Most of Rabbi Levinthal's admirers know him through his enlightening discourses delivered from the Center pulpit and at other functions. Others have followed his career through his sermons published in book form. Those who know him more intimately have the added advantage of studying one of those personalities that are rare in the rabbinate and outside of it.

Affable in the extreme, he cannot bear to hurt the sensibilities of his co-workers. I have seen him suffer real anguish rather than do anything that might deprive someone of a position to which he did not measure up. Never does he find fault for fear that he may injure the feelings of those working with him. He is the most forgiving of men and most tolerant of mistakes. He never commands, yet his requests are never refused. Jealousy never enters the minds of those about him and none envy him his great success. On the contrary, we glory in his triumphs and we feel that nothing is too good for him, no honor too great. No wonder that a fellow rabbi once remarked that "the best way to judge a rabbi is to find out what his rabbinical colleagues think of him. If the rabbis of Brooklyn were called upon to select from among themselves a Chief Rabbi for the community, they would, without a doubt, nominate and elect Dr. Levinthal to that office. For it is to him that they look constantly for guidance, counsel and leadership."

Few people realize the multitude of duties that devolve upon the modern rabbi. To be sure, he has his duties to his pulpit but preaching is not the most taxing of tasks, although even here the success of the rabbi depends on how seriously he applies himself to his sermons. No one can reach Rabbi Levinthal's standing as a preacher without hard labor and zealous devotion to his profession. His sermons are masterpieces of construction as well as thought. It is small wonder that they hold the hearer fascinated, be he of foreign birth or of American extraction, be he steeped in Jewish learning or unfamiliar with Jewish history or religion.

The rabbi, in addition, has his responsibilities to the community and the more prominent he becomes the more demands are made upon his time. But what robs him of his time and energy are the thousand and one problems that he is called upon to solve for individuals, whether members of his own congregation or otherwise. They turn to him for counsel and advice, to disentangle family or business affairs and to intercede in behalf of this or that cause, movement or personal interest. These make tremendous inroads on his strength and patience. Fortunately for him, Rabbi Levinthal is possessed of the patience of a saint and the visitor is never made aware of the valuable time he consumes.

No day is complete without the inevitable telephone call from Rabbi Levinthal. It usually comes in the morning and it lasts for quite a while. The conversation revolves around events of the previous day or evening, what meetings were held, subjects discussed, attendance, etc. If a lecture was given the night before the discussion concerns the attendance, what the speaker had to say, and the reaction of the audience. Then come problems of finance, membership, publications, future events, etc. Nothing small or large escapes him as long as it involves the interests of the Center. From purely local matters the conversation drifts to matters of general interest. "What is new in the Yiddish press?" is the next query. He is primarily concerned about the latest news from Palestine. I have yet to find a man who is more interested than he in events of the Holy Land and the Zionist movement. He seems to live and breathe in the atmosphere of Palestine, and no amount of news is sufficient to satisfy his thirst for information regarding events in that country.

Of the departments in the Center proper, the Hebrew School and the Institute of Jewish Studies for Adults are his pet activities. With fatherly care he watches and supervises all things pertaining to the schools. He is interested in every detail, whether it concerns the curricula, the staff, or the collection of outstanding accounts.

He maintains a keen interest in all  
(Continued on page 17)

# TRIBUTES TO A BELOVED RABBI

Congratulatory Messages Sent to the Brooklyn Jewish Center on the Occasion of Its Celebration of Dr. Israel H. Levinthal's Fiftieth Birthday

By CYRUS ADLER

President of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America

I AM very happy to be able to have the opportunity to send a word of greeting to the *Brooklyn Jewish Center Review* for its special issue in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of its devoted and distinguished rabbi, Dr. Israel H. Levinthal. I have known Dr. Levinthal since his boyhood and have watched his growth and development with profound interest. His virtual creation and development of the Brooklyn Jewish Center was a distinguished act in the history of congregational life in America. You yourselves know of your own development better than I do. But outside of his congregation Dr. Levinthal has had a reputation for his scholarly and popular writings and for devotion to many Jewish causes which far transcend the limits of your city or of your congregational life.

For a number of years, Dr. Levinthal has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where his service has been invaluable and, during the first semester of the present academic year, he has served with distinction as a Visiting Lecturer at the Seminary on Homiletics.

While congratulating the congregation in having such a distinguished rabbi, I wish to add a personal note and extend my heartiest felicitations to Dr. Levinthal, and also express the hope that he will have many, many years in good health to enjoy with his family and to serve the cause of Israel.

By LOUIS LIPSKY

WITH a certain eagerness, I join in the celebration of the birthday of Israel H. Levinthal. His fiftieth anniversary provokes breaking the reticences of friendship (which life's routine rarely allows).

Israel Levinthal is distinguished as rabbi, and is the rabbi par excellence. He is a teacher and preacher of religion, and all his knowledge and experience, his warmth, his enthusiasm, are absorbed in his rabbinical duties. He is a rabbi whose piety is genial and genuine, whose learning is shot

through with human sympathy, and whose preaching always subordinates effect—phrase and form—to truth and conviction.

There are rabbis who stand out as great orators or preachers or communal workers or scholars. Levinthal is all of these, but his many talents are subordinated to character. He is not made of the shreds and patches of oratory and learning or social activity, but in him are combined a force and power, as well as a gentleness of touch, which make him one of the most interesting rabbis of our day.

He was born into Zionism. His childhood was lived in a rare atmosphere of orthodoxy, learning and Zionism. From his earliest days as a student he has devoted himself to the teaching of Zionism, and in whatever field of endeavor he found himself, there he found opportunity to pursue his dominant ideal. Being a teacher and preacher he sought and found in tradition, in folk lore, in Bible and Midrash, the fuel that kept alive and informed the addresses that he has delivered in the course of many years of Zionist service. His addresses read well and speak well. They are not glib repetitions, but always reflect research and study, deep reflection and faith. He speaks "from the heart," but his heart beats in an atmosphere of Jewish living, sympathy and wisdom.

In the councils of the Zionist Organization he has always served as the man of peace, of measure, sober in judgment, keen for justice. As a speaker on the Zionist platform, he has used his homilies and exegetical wisdom as the material to illuminate the Zionist hope. Every phase of Zionism has interested and excited him. He is sympathetic to all Zionist parties, and therefore belongs to none. He is self-effacing to a fault, and only comes forward when retreat is impossible. The Zionist Organization prizes his cooperation, and regards him as a pillar of its spiritual strength.

In the celebration tendered him on February 13th, congratulations should be offered not only to Rabbi Levinthal, but also to the congregation with which he has been associated so many years, and which has had the privilege of being served by a man of such fine qualities.

By DR. ISRAEL GOLDSTEIN

President, Jewish National Fund of America

THE observance of Dr. Israel H. Levinthal's fiftieth birthday is an occasion of singular importance in the cultural, religious and social life of the community. The Brooklyn Jewish Center is honoring itself in honoring its spiritual leader.

A scholar of profound penetration and a master of eloquent and convincing utterance, which is the more precious because of its deep Jewish content, Dr. Levinthal has carved for himself a place of distinction in the American Rabbinate and has set an example for his younger colleagues. The title of his widely acclaimed volume of sermons, 'Steering or Drifting—Which?' suggests that he himself has been a steering force in the solution of the problems confronting our immediate community and world Jewry.

As a fellow Zionist and as a warm friend of Dr. Levinthal, I have had the privilege and pleasure to work with him in the councils of the Zionist Organization of America and in its fund-raising institutions, notably the Jewish National Fund and the United Palestine Appeal. I recall vividly Dr. Levinthal's moving plea at the Zionist Convention in Providence in 1936 where he lifted his persuasive voice in behalf of the Jewish National Fund's appeal for new trees to be planted in Eretz Israel to replace those wantonly destroyed by vandalism. His utterance inspired the whole convention and served as the initial stimulus for a great and unprecedented nation-wide response. In the United Palestine Appeal as well as in the Jewish National Fund, we have learned to look upon Dr. Levinthal as our tower of strength in Brooklyn Jewry.

The personal qualities of Dr. Levinthal, his modesty, geniality and graciousness, recalls the great sage of old, Hillel, who won the heart of his people by gentleness.

The National Administration of the Jewish National Fund joins me in forwarding our official and personal felicitations and good wishes to Dr. Levinthal and to the Brooklyn Jewish Center on this milestone in his career.

(Continued on next page)

In the prime of life, he stands to bring blessing to the people of Israel for many, many years to come. May strength come to him from On High.

**By RABBI ISRAEL GOLDFARB**  
President, New York Board of  
Jewish Ministers

**A**S a life long friend of Dr. Israel Herbert Levinthal, I am happy to join his numerous admirers in wishing him well on his fiftieth birthday. I hope that he will be blessed with a long life replete with good health and with further success in a career already rich in noble achievements.

Dr. Levinthal's work has been phenomenal. Not only has he filled the responsible office of spiritual leader in the Brooklyn Jewish Center with rare distinction and ability, but he has made his influence felt beyond the limits of his immediate congregation.

In spite of his arduous duties as the Rabbi of a large and active community he found time to make noteworthy contributions in the field of Jewish literature and to participate in every important activity that engaged American Israel.

Among his colleagues in the Rabbinate Dr. Levinthal is honored and admired not only for his talents as an inspiring preacher, as an erudite scholar and as a wise leader but also, and even more so, for his charming personality, his human sympathy, his enduring friendship and his sincerity.

In the name of the New York Board of Jewish Ministers, in which are included Rabbis of every shade of Judaism—Orthodox, Reform and Conservative—I greet Dr. Levinthal on his fiftieth birthday and call out to him

*Chazak Ve-Ematz!*

May each new milestone on your life's journey bring you new triumphs and successes in your chosen career as a leader and teacher in Israel.

**By SIMON GREENBERG**

President of the Rabbinical Assembly

**T**HE Rabbinical Assembly of America proudly and happily joins the host of friends and admirers of its distinguished member, Dr. Israel H. Levinthal, in paying tribute to him on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday. The qualities of mind and soul which have made him pre-eminent among the religious leaders and preachers of our generation have also endeared him to his colleagues. Despite his many outstanding achievements his personality radiates a truly religious humility

which tends to purify and inspire all who come into contact with him. We who can best appreciate the demands which must have been made upon his time and energy by ministering to so large a congregation, and by its activities in behalf of many other good causes, esteem all the more the scholarly interests which he succeeded in maintaining, and which are admirably reflected in his spoken and written word. Judicious in temperament, sympathetic and understanding of heart, his counsel and advice are eagerly sought after by his colleagues and by the Rabbinical Assembly as a whole. As a past president of the Assembly, and now among its most respected and beloved "elder statesmen," his influence is felt in all our deliberations and activities.

The celebration arranged by the Brooklyn Jewish Center is further recognition of the blessing which it enjoys in having an individual of Dr. Levinthal's qualities as its spiritual leader. We know, also, how grateful Dr. Levinthal has been for the privilege of serving the families associated with the Center. This beautiful cooperation between rabbi and congregation has set an example which others might well seek to emulate. In behalf of the members of the Rabbinical Assembly, may I express the prayer that this happy relationship continue to flourish for many more years to come and to bring its blessings not only to those directly affected, but to our community as a whole.

**By LOUIS J. MOSS**  
President of The United Synagogue  
of America

**I** AM very happy to learn that the Brooklyn Jewish Center, whose pulpit Rabbi Israel Herbert Levinthal occupies, will give recognition to his fiftieth birthday by signaling this event in an appropriate manner.

Dr. Levinthal has been identified with the Brooklyn Jewish Center since its formation, and without minimizing the notable contribution to success made by large numbers of laymen, its present position and standing in the community is, to a large extent, due to the inspiration, guidance, and genius of his ministry.

His influence has not been limited to the confines of the synagogue itself, but transcends its walls and is felt throughout the community. With him religion is more than adherence to rules and formulae. He envisions it as a force which ought to motivate

and mold human actions and conduct. In consequence, it is not surprising to find him aligned with and a spokesman for all causes which contribute to this larger purpose.

Dr. Levinthal is still in the prime of life. It is our hope and wish that he may be vouchsafed health and strength to continue his illustrious career for the good of his own congregation and of the larger community of Israel.

**By JOSEPH MILLER**  
President Brooklyn Jewish Ministers  
Association

**I** AM grateful for the opportunity to pen a few words of greeting to my colleague and friend, Dr. Israel H. Levinthal, upon his attaining of the jubilee year of his life.

Dr. Levinthal has rightly earned the title of "beloved Rabbi." His genial personality, his kindness, his friendship, his wisdom and sagacity have been most inspiring to the American rabbinate, no matter of what school of Judaism. His word is listened to attentively and his counsel is sought by both Rabbi and layman.

But it is in Brooklyn where Dr. Levinthal has made himself felt most.

He was one of the founders of the Brooklyn Jewish Ministers Association and the first president of the organization. He has always stood firmly for a united Brooklyn rabbinate as a symbol of a united Jewish community.

When the future historian will write the story of Brooklyn Jewry, the name of Israel H. Levinthal will be writ in golden letters.

As president of the Brooklyn Jewish Ministers Association which includes the orthodox, conservative and reformed rabbis of Brooklyn, I extend the felicitations of the Brooklyn rabbinate to Dr. Levinthal upon the celebration of his fiftieth birthday. We of the Brooklyn rabbinate look to him for continued leadership. We hope to continue to be inspired by his powerful prophetic utterances. May he continue to enhance American Jewish life and strengthen the cause which is so sacred to all of us.

The Brooklyn Jewish Ministers Association also extends its congratulations to the Brooklyn Jewish Center, its officers and members upon this joyous occasion when their Rabbi has reached his fiftieth milestone. The Center has become a model Jewish institution for American Israel because of the services rendered to

American Judaism by its spiritual leader. May both the Rabbi and his congregation continue to work in the vineyard of the Lord for the greater glory of God and of His people, Israel.

### By WILL DURANT

WILL you convey to Rabbi Levinthal my greetings and congratulations on his 50th birthday? Fifty seems so young for one who has done so much. The Brooklyn Jewish Center is fortunate in having for its spiritual leader a gentleman, a scholar and a saint. May you all go on together in the great work of providing a home and hearth for the mind and soul of Brooklyn Jewry.

### By RUTH SEINFEL GOODE

WE were still young enough, my friends and I, so that going with our parents to the Friday evening services was something of an event in itself. It seems to me now that that was actually the first evening service I attended, the one at which I first heard Rabbi Levinthal preach a sermon. I know it is the first one I remember.

A young man, so slight as to seem almost fragile, with a voice which whispered gently, yet carried somehow with the same soft pervasiveness to the farthest pews of the synagogue. I remember thinking, as I sat there trying not to fidget, that if I blew rather hard I could blow him away. But from the moment he began to speak I forgot about fidgeting, forgot everything in listening to that quiet voice, hearing it deepen and grow stronger with the intense deep earnestness of a young man speaking for the first time to his new congregation.

I cannot remember what his text was, that Friday evening, nor what precisely he said to that congregation listening with a stillness as complete as my own. But I remember much of what he said other times, speaking to our class when we were graduated from Sunday School and Hebrew School, on the high holidays, on wintry Chanukahs when our cheeks tingled in the warmth of the synagogue, on Shevuoth when young spring air breathed through the open panes in the high stained glass windows, on the great day when his voice first sounded through the impressive spaces of the Center, at my own marriage.

Through the youth of so many of us, my generation and those who have come after, the gentle earnest voice of

Rabbi Levinthal is threaded like a *leit motif*, reminding us always of our high heritage as Jews. Now the authority that sounded in his voice even as a young man has come to full maturity, his soundness as a scholar and thinker has the admiration of Jews and non-Jews who have never even seen him, his eloquence has moved many thousands.

But to us who first knew him in our girlhood and boyhood, even while we congratulate him on his fiftieth birthday, he is still, despite the nimbus of whitening hair about his head, a young man to whose quiet but compelling voice we would always listen.

For fifty years more and still another fifty he will have our warm, enduring affection and respect.

### By CHARLES REZNIKOFF

YOU have inherited an honorable name,  
And you are called by an honorable title:

You have added honor to both.  
The lies about our people have become so swift and many  
How can the single truth overtake and answer them all?  
It will live, the easy-going say.  
Yes, the truth will live,  
But only if such as you live and work  
And only where such as you work and live.

### By ELIAS LIEBERMAN

(Translated into Yiddish by  
Dr. Abraham Asen)

S'IS feierdigs faran in Mensh was firt;

Die Sel uns leiten is sein bagern;  
Far im, der Roim und Zeit nit eksistirt;  
In yer'er tat, er strebt alz zu die Stern.

Und wen es dreit sich in ihr kreis die erd,

Bagaistert uns dein Stirn zu Gott dort oibn,

Dem Menshen's tsar farbreut si und farzert;

Und gor sein sorg — in zungen flam fon gloibn.

### By JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

I AM proud and happy to be numbered among those who are joining in the celebration of the 50th birthday of Dr. Israel H. Levinthal, distinguished and beloved rabbi of the

Brooklyn Jewish Center.

I admire Dr. Levinthal for his gentle and gracious spirit, his stalwart and independent spiritual convictions, and his noble and unremitting public service. He represents in my mind an almost miraculous combination of the great scholar and the great executive. In his scholarly attainments, so ably manifested in his preaching and writing, Dr. Levinthal perpetuates the great rabbinical tradition of his people. As the leader of the Brooklyn Jewish Center he administers the multifarious activities of one of the largest religious institutions in the country. How he combines these two functions so successfully I cannot imagine—but his scholarship remains today as profound as ever and his management of the Center as successful. A great Jew, a great citizen, and a great man, Dr. Levinthal may well be cherished by his people as a treasure committed to their sacred keeping for the service of this community and of the nation and the world. As Dr. Levinthal passes the fiftieth milestone of his career he is moving, I am convinced, into the most useful and splendid period of his life. May he be blessed through many years to come with unflinching health, unabated spiritual vigor, and the unflinching protection and love of his people.

### By HENRY SEINFEL

WERE it not for the strict orders of my physician, it would have been my extreme pleasure to attend the dinner in your honor and to join our friends in the celebration of your 50th birthday anniversary. Unfortunately I must resort to this means of extending to you my heartiest felicitations and best wishes on this occasion.

To me this celebration is an event of great significance in view of the friendly relationship which has existed between us for a great many years. You were my rabbi and spiritual advisor for years prior to the organization of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, and ever since the inception of our beloved institution. But you have been something more. You have served as a shining example in my communal work, a source of inspiration. You have often encouraged me to devote my energies to help various causes and movements in Jewry. I look back to the years spent in the service of my people with a feeling of satisfaction

(Continued on page 22)

# SELECTIONS FROM DR. LEVINTHAL'S SERMONS

FROM THE SERIES "JUDAISM"

THE first characteristic that I would claim for Judaism, which we are about to expound, is its emphasis upon knowledge.

\* \* \*

Much of the confusion that reigns in Jewish life is due to the astounding lack of knowledge of our past, of the ideals and hopes, the teachings and aspirations that molded and directed Jewish life in the days gone by. Ignorant of this past, we know not how to face the future.

\* \* \*

There is a Rabbinic legend which tells that when a stranger came to the city of Sodom and asked for hospitality, the Sodomites did not refuse him but forced the stranger to sleep in the bed provided by them. If the bed were too small for him, they would cut off his legs until his body fitted the bed. If the bed were too large, they would stretch his head and feet, so that even though he lost his life, his body was made to fit. That has become the attitude of many of us in our reasoning about Judaism. We mutilate it, stretch it, perform all sorts of surgical feats upon it, to make it fit in with ideas fostered by an un-Jewish or even anti-Jewish environment.

\* \* \*

Judaism is not a stagnant pool, but a living stream that has its source in the heights of Sinai, and that has flowed through many a bend down the ages, becoming ever wider and broader in its course.

\* \* \*

Judaism, in our definition, is the spiritual creation of the Jewish people in all the years of its growth and development.

\* \* \*

Other religions are individualistic, not dependent upon the nationality of the adherent. A Chinaman may be a Christian or a Mohammedan or a Buddhist. Judaism is dependent upon the adherent's Jewish nationality; it is a national civilization, coming out of the Jewish people and dependent upon the Jewish people.

\* \* \*

Judaism and the Jewish people are inescapable. Just as in electricity, the positive and negative currents are both

needed to give the electric spark, so, too, Judaism and Jewry have ever been dependent upon each other.

\* \* \*

Not only did the Israelites carry the Ark on their journey in the wilderness, say the Rabbis, but "the Ark carried its bearers." So may it be said of the Jew and Judaism. Not only did the Jew give life to Judaism, but Judaism, too, preserved the Jew.

\* \* \*

Judaism is distinguished by its emphasis upon this world, in contradistinction to all other religions, which emphasize the other world. If you examine our Pentateuch, the earliest record of the youth of Israel, you will find hardly a mention of the other world. "It is not in heaven" that the Torah or Judaism finds its greatest concern, but in man — in man's thoughts and ways of life, in transforming earth into a veritable heaven. Judaism discouraged the tendency, fostered by other religious cults, of spending one's days worrying about heaven and hell—about what is before or after one's life on earth. Spend your time in learning that which is your duty here on earth: this was Judaism's decree.

Some of you may recall that beautiful Midrash which interprets why the Torah of the Jews begins with the letter Beth, the first letter of the first word of the Bible—Bereshith. "The Beth is formed closed on the top, closed underneath, closed from behind and open only on the one side to the front of it. And the Torah begins with the Beth to teach us that we are not to be too much concerned with that which is above the earth or beneath the earth or even that which is behind us before the formation of the earth. That which alone is open for us, as in the Beth—that which alone must be our chief concern—is what lies before us here on earth!" How different is this conception from the conception of Christianity and all other religions! "My kingdom is not of this world!" — these words, put into the lips of the young Jew whom Christianity deified, show in clearest fashion their antithesis to the fundamental teachings of Judaism.

That is why asceticism, so popular in all other religious cults, was not only not encouraged but actually discouraged by Judaism, and never had a chance to develop in Jewish life. The Nazarite, who vowed to abstain from wine had to bring an offering, because, as the Rabbis explain, "he sinned in that he wilfully denied himself" the pleasures of life.

\* \* \*

When Lord Bacon dogmatizes about prosperity being the blessing of the Old Testament whereas adversity is the blessing of the New Testament, we Jews take it as a compliment to the genius of Judaism rather than an insult.

\* \* \*

There is an exquisite Oriental fable which tells of a sage who had been meditating vainly for days on the question, What is God? One day, walking along the seashore, he saw some children busying themselves by digging holes in the sand and pouring into them water from the sea. "What are you doing there?" he asked. They replied, "We want to empty the sea of its water." "Oh, you little fools!" he exclaimed with a smile; but suddenly his smile vanished in serious thought. "Am I not as foolish as these children? he said to himself. "How can I with my small brain hope to grasp the infinite nature of God?"

\* \* \*

"Modern science of the real sort," said Dr. Robert A. Millikan recently, "is learning to walk humbly with its God." He ridicules the cocksureness of the old science that thought it had mastered everything. "We are not living in a mechanistic dispensation but in a universe of order and design responding perfectly to the niceties of mathematical law, and of beneficent purpose also." Concluding his presidential address before the American Society for the Advancement of Science, he puts before us the rhetorical question: "Has not modern physics thrown the purely mechanistic view of the universe root and branch out of its house?"

\* \* \*

Sir James Jeans, attacking the mechanistic view, tells us: "The universe seems to be nearer to a great thought than to a great machine." Sir Arthur

Keith warns us that the human brain is a poor instrument to solve the ultimate problems as to the meaning, origin and purpose of human life. "We have to recognize its limitations. Yet it perceives how well ordered all things are and how wonderful are the inventions of nature. Design is mani-wonderful in the inventions of nature. Design is manifest everywhere. Whether we are laymen or scientists, we must postulate a Lord of the Universe, give Him what shape we will."

\* \* \*

Eddington does not hesitate to proclaim: "Dismiss the idea that natural law may swallow up religion; it cannot even tackle the multiplication table single-handed!" He derides some of the modern intellectuals who seem to be so certain of their new views by reminding them that "There is a kind of sureness which is very different from cocksureness." And Julian S. Huxley puts it even more concretely when he tells us that "Science may destroy particular theologies, but it cannot destroy religion . . . because the religious spirit is as much the property of human nature as is of the scientific spirit."

\* \* \*

When I see men and women who scoff and sneer at those who cherish their God-belief and who try to consecrate their lives to their God, I am reminded of the beautiful tale that the Baal Shem Tob, the founder of Hassidism, told his followers in answer to those who called his teaching false. There was once a wedding in a house. The musicians sat in a corner and played upon their instruments, the guests danced to the music and were merry. But a deaf man passed outside the house. He looked in through the window and saw the people dancing, leaping and throwing their arms about. "See how they fling themselves about," he cried. "It is a house filled with madmen!" He regarded them as madmen because he could not hear the music to which they danced. Yea, they are deaf—they cannot hear the heavenly music which gives such joy and bliss to those whose ears and souls are divinely attuned.

\* \* \*

When that gallant young American, Charles Lindbergh, stepped out of his plane in the aerodrome at Paris, the first word that came from his lips was "We flew over the ocean!" His plane had become so much a part of his being that, personifying it, he could well speak of it and himself as We! In

the same sense could the Jew always speak of God and himself as We! God had become such a vital force in his being, and the Jew in turn had so attached himself to the Will of that God, that each could in turn speak of We!

\* \* \*

Some people childishly assume that we have but one defined conception of God, and that unless you accept that conception, you must surrender any claim to a belief in God. There is no fixed concept of God in Judaism; conceptions of Him have grown and de-

veloped and changed from the dawn of Jewish life to our own day! It is the same with mankind as it is with an individual.

When you talk to a child about God, you talk to him in childish language, in the language of fairy tales, if you will, in language that his tender mind can grasp. When he grows older you speak to him of the same theme in an altogether different language.

(Continued on next page)

## A TRIBUTE FROM PROFESSOR MORRIS LEVINE

Translated from the Hebrew by Mordecai H. Lewittes

(The following essay is from "The Collected Writings of Morris Levine—1881-1937," and appeared originally in the *Hadoar*, as a review of Dr. Levinthal's "Steering or Drifting—Which?" Dr. Levine served as professor of Hebrew in the Jewish Theological Seminary of America—Ed.)

DR. Levinthal's discourses are convincing proof that a sermon, based on Biblical and Rabbinic sayings, possesses a special appeal and can be particularly effective in attracting the listeners, and in inspiring them with the fundamental spirit of Judaism. Many of us have long known Dr. Levinthal as a gifted preacher, whose eloquence captivated his listeners. We were not completely aware, however, of the source of his power. This attractive edition of his sermons clearly indicates that he possesses not only the talent of the orator, but, what is of greater significance, the rare intellectual ability to ferret out precious stones from their incrustation of Rabbinic teachings, and embellish them with the beautiful setting of ideas concerning the needs of Judaism in the present and its hopes for the future. Few contemporary American preachers can equal him in extracting from the words of the Rabbis their full intent, and in adapting the thought to conditions in our own day—as if our predecessors spoke not only for their own time and generation, but for all times and for all generations.

Sermons depend upon the spoken word; the printed page often destroys their effectiveness. Dr. Levinthal's sermons, however, lose nothing in print; their charm and brilliance remain un-

impaired. They make a strong impression on the reader who is familiar with this branch of literature, and remain fixed in the memory because interwoven, as with the hand of an artist, with Biblical quotations and fascinating Midrashim, stimulating to both emotion and intellect. The ordinary reader, although not thoroughly familiar with Biblical and Rabbinic sources, retains many phrases, because of his keen enjoyment of Dr. Levinthal's beautiful interpretations, and feels respect and admiration for our seers and sages. He is moved by the desire that his children acquire the ability to understand these thoughts in the original Hebrew, and is encouraged to aid those who are striving to prevent Israel's Torah from being forgotten.

Dr. Levinthal does not attempt to present novel doctrines or conceptions about the spiritual mission of Judaism, just as he does not preen himself by indulging in philosophic speculations about the establishment of a Utopian society through the betterment of social and political conditions. He avoids polemics, attacks on rival parties or policies, or criticisms of those entertaining opposite beliefs and ideas. Dr. Levinthal's thoughts and talents are essentially devoted to the practical needs of Judaism in our day and in our land.

The discourse in memory of Wilson serves as an excellent illustration of the beauty and force with which a speaker can invest a sermon when he knows how to tie up the thought with appropriate texts from the Bible or Agada. But Scriptures and Midrash are not used by Dr. Levinthal solely

(Continued on page 17)

Some of you may recall the fact that a few years ago, a professor in one of our colleges startled a convention of scientists and savants with the declaration that science today demands a new conception of God, and that this newer view must be formulated in the light of contemporary astrophysics, which seems to be in conflict with so many of the traditional theological and cosmological ideas. I remember quite vividly what a furor this statement made in the newspapers, how a high and distinguished prelate of the church denounced in most emphatic language the very idea of such a demand. What would be the answer of traditional, historic Judaism to such a challenge? Judaism would say: "If you can give the world a new, a clearer glimpse of the Divine, if you have a new conception that you can offer to the human heart athirst for God, by all means let us have it, and the world shall be your debtor for all time!" That is the beauty of Judaism. Judaism has never been, and is not now, and never will be opposed to any new conception of God which the human mind may formulate, as long as that conception is still that of God and not of something that is to serve as a substitute for God. It believes that man's conception of God must grow with the growth of the human mind and with the enrichment of the human heart.

\* \* \*

I recall reading a novel comment on the text: "And there was evening and morning, *Yom Ehad*, the first day." Why does the Bible, in describing the other days of creation, speak of them as "the second," "the third," "the fourth," and so on, whereas of the first day the Bible does not say *Yom Rishon*, "the first day," but *Yom Ehad*, "one day?" From this we can learn, not that this was the first day in the life of the universe, but that it was in the process of fashioning for countless years, and that the Bible starts to recount its development from *Yom Ehad*, "a certain day"—one day—and not the first day since it began to be.

\* \* \*

Is Judaism in conflict with science? Oh, no! To use the phrase of Maimonides, it accepts every truth, from whosoever proclaims it. All truth—in science, in ethics, in morality, in philosophy—is but a new glimpse into the revelation of the Divine Truth which first came to man on Sinai's heights. Our Judaism is a tree of life, growing, expanding, developing with life itself, for the blessedness of all mankind!

Ceremonies may first of all be regarded as symbolizing the poetry of all communal life. We may not be able to analyze them logically, but life is not based upon cold logic alone.

\* \* \*

One must indeed be a poet to be able adequately to describe the thrill that came from the observance of all these innumerable customs and rituals. The early leaders in the Reform movement who advocated and labored for the abolition of many of these ceremonial observances in Jewish life on the ground that we are living in an Age of Reason, and that cold logic cannot justify their further retention, failed to grasp this poetic value so essential to normal life. Heinrich Heine's reaction to their efforts displays a keener insight than that possessed by these theologians: "Some quack doctors have sought to heal the body of Judaism of its fatal skin disease through blood-letting, and through their blundering and their gossamer reason-bandages cause Israel to bleed almost to death."

\* \* \*

Ceremonies and ritual have been encouraged in Jewish life not only because of this poetic beauty and sanctifying influence, but also because of their educational value. Leading authorities tell us that the new and most effective methods in education are those which no longer rely on the mind accumulating facts, but on the eye perceiving and the hands effect-

ing the results desired. That is the basis of the project method in education, which we have adopted in our own Center Academy and which is today the rule in all progressive schools.

\* \* \*

You need but recall the picture that Zangwill draws of the Jewish renegade who thought that he had severed himself altogether from his people, but who, on the eve of Passover, was so overpowered by the memories of the Seder of his childhood that he fled back to his home eager to imbibe once again the blessedness of his people's kinship.

\* \* \*

These ceremonies have kept fresh in the mind of the Jew the facts of his history. In the Passover ritual he lived over again the experiences of his people in Egypt. Through the Succoth ceremonials he felt the trials of his people wandering in the desert. The Hanukkah lights made him feel that he was battling at the side of the Maccabees for his people's preservation.

\* \* \*

It is this ceremonial observance that has kept alive the *esprit de corps* so essential for any group if its existence is to be assured. It has formed the national defense of the Jew, maintaining the national unity through national action. What a land does for the national life of every other people,

(Continued on page 20)

## PROFESSOR ALEXANDER MARX AT SIXTY

A Tribute from Dr. Israel H. Levinthal

ON January 27th the Jewish scholarly world recalled with love and veneration the sixtieth birthday anniversary of one of our most illustrious scholars, Professor Alexander Marx. The *Review* is happy to join in offering felicitations to the distinguished celebrant.

It is due primarily to his indefatigable labors and to his mastery in the field of bibliography that we have in the Jewish Theological Seminary of America the greatest collection of Jewish books and manuscripts to be found anywhere in the world. His unique knowledge of Jewish books has made him the debtor of all who labor in the field of *Yiddische Wissenschaft*. He has enriched the study of Jewish history with numerous volumes and pamphlets that have brought new

light on many events in the past. In the thirty odd years of his association with the Seminary, where he is Professor of Jewish History as well as the Librarian, he has helped to rear a generation of rabbis and scholars, who owe to him their appreciation and their love for painstaking and diligent research in Jewish studies.

But even more than for his remarkable scholarship, Professor Marx is beloved for his saintly character. In him we behold the Jew at his best and his noblest. Looking at him, we seem to see the image of those prophetic sages of old who glorified the pages of Jewish history.

We hope and pray that he and his loved ones may be blessed with health and strength, so that he may continue to enrich our spiritual and cultural heritage *Ad Me-ah V'esrim Shannah!*

# BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER ACTIVITIES

## SPECIAL SABBATH SERVICES THIS WEEK IN HONOR OF DR. LEVINTHAL'S 50th BIRTHDAY

Special services will be held this Friday night, February 11th, and Sabbath morning, February 12th in honor of the 50th birthday anniversary of our Rabbi.

At the services Friday night which will begin at 8:30 o'clock, we shall be privileged to hear an address delivered by Hon. Mitchell May, Justice of the Supreme Court who will evaluate the services of the Rabbi in behalf of the community. Rabbi Joseph Miller, the Rabbi of Congregation Sharei Torah, and the president of the Brooklyn Jewish Ministers Association will extend the greetings of that organization to the Rabbi.

At the services on Saturday morning the sermon will be delivered by another distinguished guest who will be with us that Sabbath, Rev. Dr. Elias Solomon, the honorary president of the United Synagogue of America. Dr. Solomon is well known to our community. He has rendered distinguished services to our faith for more than a third of a century. We are confident that many of our members will attend both of these special services. Rev. Kantor will lead in the congregational singing.

## PROF. OVERSTREET, DISTINGUISHED PHILOSOPHER and PSYCHOLOGIST TO LECTURE AT CENTER FORUM

The speaker at our Forum on Monday evening, February 14th at 8:30 o'clock promptly, will be Dr. Harry A. Overstreet, head of the Department of Philosophy of the College of the City of New York. The subject of his address will be "Towards a New Philosophy of Life."

Prof. Overstreet is nationally known as a writer and lecturer on psychology and philosophy. He is the author of "About Ourselves," "Influencing Human Behavior," "The Enduring Quest," "We Move in New Directions," etc.

Admission will be free to Center members; there will be a 25c charge to all others.

## MARVIN LOWENTHAL, DISTINGUISHED AUTHOR, TO SPEAK FROM OUR PULPIT ON FRIDAY EVENING, FEB. 18th

At our late services on Friday evening, February 18th, we shall be privileged to have as our guest speaker, Marvin Lowenthal, the distinguished author and lecturer who will speak to us on the subject "The Jew in the European Caldron."



*Marvin Lowenthal*

Mr. Lowenthal is the author of "The Jews of Germany," "The Autobiography of Michael de Montaigne," and "The Memoirs of Glueckel of Hamelin." He has written extensively for the Menorah Journal, The Freeman, The Nation, etc.

## CHASSIDIC EVENING, FEB. 27th

The Third in the season's series of Yiddish evenings, will be held on Sunday, Feb. 27th at 8:30 P. M. This will be a Chassidic evening devoted to talks on the lives of the Chassidim and Chassidic melodies.

Dr. Abraham Asen will open the meeting and will introduce the chairman of the evening, Mr. D. L. Mekler of the Jewish Morning Journal. Mr. Menasche Unger of The Day who has written extensively on Chassidism will deliver an address. Our own cantor, Rev. Samuel Kantor, and Mr. Isador Savitt will sing Chassidic songs.

Admission will be free to Center members. All others will be charged 25c.

## SISTERHOOD MEETING MONDAY AFTERNOON, FEB. 14th

The Sisterhood of the Center will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday afternoon, February 14th at 1:30 o'clock. An interesting literary program has been arranged. Mrs. Louis N. Jaffe will review Ludwig Lewisohn's latest book, "The Trumpet of Jubilee," and Mrs. Maurice Bernhardt will discuss current Jewish events. Mrs. Max Siegler will present to the Sisterhood an etching on behalf of the Ivriah.

All women of the Center are cordially invited to attend this and all future meetings which are held every second Monday afternoon of the month.

## CLUB NEWS

Activities were resumed in the Junior League once more, after the lull that comes with January examinations. On February 3rd, Mr. Lester Lyons addressed the group on Jewish current events, touching on recent developments in Palestine, Europe and America. The acquisition by the Center of an electric victrola has helped liven up the weekly Thursday night meetings. Plans are being made for another large social in the near future.

The Center Club issued a 7-page Chronicle on February 5th which included a tribute to Dr. Levinthal, editorials, personals and feature articles. Those on the staff are: Edward Schiller (Editor-in-Chief), Morton Farber, Simeon Gluckson, Rosalinde Wolf, Norman Ruchman, Bertram Hyde, Betty Zeckvowitz, Rita Greenspan, Lula Stein, Sheldon Atlas, Serena Weissman, Herbert Leiberman.

"The Maccabees and Vivalets held a song-night on January 30th. After singing American folk-songs, Palestinian songs were introduced, and the program was concluded with a spirited Horah in which even several adult visitors enthusiastically joined.

### RECENT BOOKS ACQUIRED BY THE LIBRARY

The following books have been acquired recently by the Center library and are now available for circulation:

"Brothers Ashkenazie"—I. Singer.

"Young Henry of Navarre"—Heinrich Mann.

"Mother"—Sholom Asch.

"The Bible as Living Literature"—Bates.

"Trumpet of Jubilee"—Ludwig Lewisohn.

### CENTER LIBRARY

The library of the Center is now circulating books of Jewish interest in Hebrew, English and Yiddish. Members of the Center and their friends who are interested in obtaining books for home reading are requested to please see our librarian, Dr. Rabinowitz, who is at the library on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30 P. M. to 9:30 P. M. and on Sundays from 10:30 A. M. to 3:30 P. M.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF GIFTS TO THE LIBRARY

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following gifts to the Center Library:

Mrs. H. E. Boskowitz

Jacob S. Doner

Morris Greenhouse

H. Gutman

Dr. M. Higger

Rabbi I. H. Levinthal

Mr. and Mrs. Philip L. Lipshutz

Mrs. Israel H. Levinthal presented to the Center a number of important volumes in Hebrew, English and Yiddish in honor of Rabbi Levinthal's 50th birthday.

### Sisterhood Theatre Party

Wednesday Afternoon  
March 9th



Broadway's Successful Play

"SHOEMAKER'S  
HOLIDAY"

will be presented at the

National Theatre

41st Street West of Broadway



Tickets May Be Obtained from the  
Chairman of the Committee, Mrs.  
Maurice Bernhardt (Tel. Slo. 6-2135)

### CLUB ACTIVITIES

Maccabees—Open to sons of Center members thirteen and fourteen years of age. Meetings held on Saturday evenings, at 8:00 o'clock. Leader—Mr. Gerson Chertoff.

Vivalets — Daughters of Center members thirteen and fourteen years of age. Meetings held on Saturday evenings at 7:30 o'clock. Leader — Mrs. Martin H. Barad.

Center Club—sons and daughters of Center members—boys fifteen to seventeen; girls, fifteen and sixteen. Next meeting, this Saturday evening at 8 o'clock. Leader—Mr. Milton Balsam.

### BAR MITZVAH

Congratulations are hereby extended to Mr. and Mrs. Abraham H. Zirn of 1042 Union Street, upon the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Benjamin, at the Center on February 12th.

### "THE MIKADO" TO BE PRESENTED AT THE CENTER ON FEB. 16th

Under the joint auspices of the Federal Theatre Project and the Social Committee of the Center, Gilbert and Sullivan's famous operetta "The Mikado" will be presented in our auditorium on Wednesday evening, Feb. 16th at 8:30 o'clock. Tickets of admission are now on sale at 25c.

### PERSONALS

Mr. Samuel P. Abelow's History of Brooklyn Jewry, was included in the American Hebrew's annual Who's Who issue as one of the leading books of Jewish interest published during the year 1937.

Our best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery are extended to Mr. David Nemerov of 242 East 51st St. who recently met with an accident resulting in an eye injury.

William I. Siegel was designated by Governor Lehman to represent him at the exercises held on Friday, January 28th at Temple Beth-El of Troy, New York.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Our best wishes and hearty congratulations are extended to our physical training director, Mr. Samuel Schoenfeld and to Mrs. Schoenfeld upon the birth of a son on Friday, February 4th.

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FROM BROOKLYN TUBERCULOSIS AND HEALTH ASSOCIATION

The Brooklyn Tuberculosis and Health Association in cooperation with the Medical Society of the County of Kings, is conducting a campaign now to reduce the disease of tuberculosis and to eradicate as much of it as possible. Examinations have been made of several thousand children in the public schools who thought that they were well and the result showed at least 3% affected. When caught in time, the disease is curable. For that reason we are asking all men and women of this borough to take this special X-ray test which this association is willing to give to everyone who applies. The cost for such examination is the modest sum of \$1.00, a charge made so small to be within the reach of everyone. This small charge is made possible only on account of the large number made at one time and place by a special process and because a group of physicians of experience in this field of work are volunteering time and service. The fee includes the taking of the X-ray and a report of the findings. The finished X-ray picture becomes the property of the person X-rayed. The \$1.00 fee will be collected at the time the X-ray is taken.

The Association will not give any medical advice, but if a negative report is shown, will refer you to your own physician. This is a service that should be appreciated by the community. Those interested are asked to get in touch with the headquarters of the Association, 293 Schermerhorn St., Tel. Triangle 5-0717 to make an appointment.

### Monthly Social Meeting

of the

### CENTER MEMBERSHIP



Wednesday Evening  
February 23rd

at 8:30 o'clock



A Bridge Party will follow a brief  
business meeting

Refreshments Will Be Served



All Members of the Center are  
Cordially Invited to Attend

### CENTER PLAYERS

The Center Players are now casting for a new play. Members who are interested in joining the group will please attend the meeting scheduled for next Monday evening, February 14th, at 8:30 o'clock.

### FORUM ON WORLD AFFAIRS

The Brooklyn Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, is sponsoring a forum on world affairs on Tuesday, February 15th, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. The speakers will include Louis Fischer, Dr. A. J. Muste, Dr. Emil Lengyel, Rabbi A. L. Feinberg, Mrs. William D. Sporborg, Dr. Randolph Sailer, Lucy Frances Cooper, David Popper, etc. There will be two sessions: one at 10:30 A. M. and one at 2:30 P. M. Mrs. Louis J. Gribetz is chairman of the Peace Study Group. Admission will be free to all.

### BASKETBALL NEWS

The Brooklyn Jewish Center basketball team will play against the Y. M. H. A. of Williamsburg this Sunday evening, February 13th at the Y. M. H. A. court on Bedford Avenue.

### CENTER ACADEMY THEATRE PARTY

#### "OUR TOWN"

By Thornton Wilder

Acclaimed by All Critics as the  
Finest Contribution to the American  
Theatre in Years.

at the

#### Morosco Theatre

Monday Evening, March 7th

### DR. LEVINTHAL AS I KNOW HIM

(Continued from page 8)

other activities such as the Center Academy, which is one of the youngest of the Center departments, the Forums, the social activities, and, of course, the Religious Service Department, which is directly under his supervision.

The very walls of the Center building breathe his congenial spirit and all those who in one form or another are part of this great institution are grateful to him for all that he has meant to them in the years of the Center's existence. Prayerfully we hope that he may continue to exert this in-

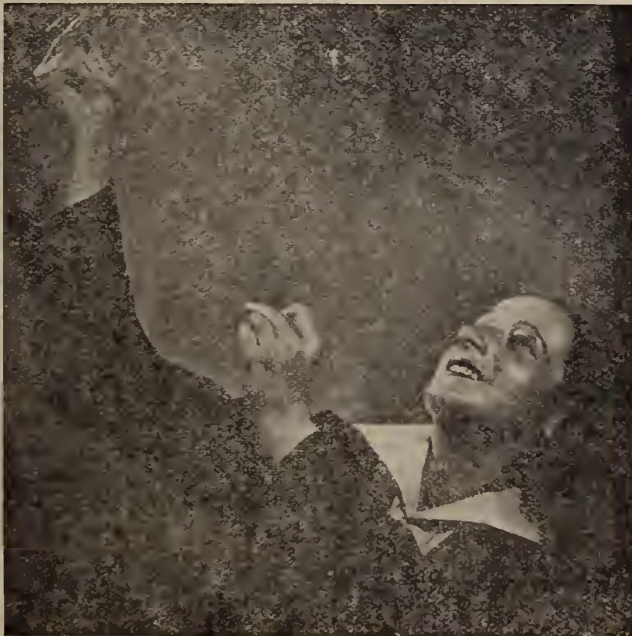
fluence for a great many years to come.

### A TRIBUTE FROM PROFESSOR LEVINE

(Continued from page 13)

as decorative material to ornament the subject at hand, but rather as an aid in creating the subject matter itself. He examines Midrash Tanhuma and finds the following interesting comment: "There were three men who saw destruction—Noah, Daniel and Job. Noah saw a world in existence, saw it destroyed, and again beheld its reconstruction. Daniel saw the glory of the first Temple, witnessed its destruction, but also beheld the building of the second Temple. Job saw the growth, the upbuilding of his home, saw also its ruin, but again beheld its revival and reconstruction." He ponders over the words of the Midrash, and thoughts arise concerning the World War and its fearful outcome—a universe in ruins; concerning religion whose influence on life has waned—the Temple in ruins; concerning family life whose sanctity has disappeared—the home in ruins.

And thus was created his remarkable sermon "Three That Saw Destruction."



Dvora Lapson is one dancer possessing vision and knowledge—so essential in order to express choreographically the soul of the Jewish masses.

DAVID PINSKI

## Dvora Lapson

Character Dancer and Pantomimist in a Program of

### BIBLICAL, CHASSIDIC AND PALESTINIAN DANCES

(IN COSTUME)

### BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER MONDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 21st

at 8:30 o'clock

(Washington's Birthday Eve)

TICKETS NOW ON SALE AT 50c and 75c

It is a supreme delight to watch the artistic dance performance of Dvora Lapson. Her interpretation of the spirit and mood of Jewish festivals, rites and ceremonies through the medium of the dance is captivating and delightful.

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Dvora Lapson will be most pleasantly remembered for her staging of the dances in the Hebrew Opera, "The Pioneer." Her ballet, based on the Palestinian Hora, spirited and well composed, was quite the brightest spot in the entire production.

NEW YORK TIMES

# APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

Angenstein, Joseph  
Dress Mfg. Unmarried  
Res. 723 Empire Blvd.  
Bus. 1400 Broadway  
*Proposed by Bernard Fink  
and Mack Sussman*

Auerbach, Miss Carolyn  
Res. 506 Willoughby Ave.

Avins, Jack  
Buttons Unmarried  
Res. 1646 Union Street  
Bus. 370 West 35th St.  
*Proposed by Max and Nat Wolfe*

Harry A. Freedman

Berkowitz, Max  
Underwear Married  
Res. 690 E. 48th St.  
Bus. 159 Madison Ave.  
*Proposed by Mrs. S. Dembicer*

Braunstein, Victor  
Construction Unmarried  
Res. 18 Bay 28th St.  
Bus. 124 Green St.  
*Proposed by Irving Levine  
and Wm. Rosenberg*

Davis, Jerome  
Retail Shoes Married  
Res. 370 New York Ave.  
Bus. 1480 Bedford Ave.  
*Proposed by Dr. Joseph Horowitz*

Edinoff, Sidney  
Dept. Welfare Unmarried  
Res. 123 Grove St.  
Bus. 2032 Coney Island Ave.

Ginsburg, Martin  
Leathergoods Unmarried  
Res. 1045 St. Johns Place  
Bus. 453 Bergenline Ave.  
*Proposed by Mr. & Mrs. Jacob  
Ginsburg*

Jacoby, Herman  
Accountant Married  
Res. 1588 Carroll St.  
Bus. 1450 Broadway  
*Proposed by Abraham Pollack  
and Nathan Wolfe*

Karron, Murray  
Unmarried  
Res. 1641 President St.  
*Proposed by Abraham Pollack  
and Aaron Pollack*

Klein, David  
City. Govt. Unmarried  
Res. 969 Carroll St.  
Bus. Boro Hall  
*Proposed by Milton D. Balsam*

Kramer, Irving M.  
Unmarried  
Res. 1740 Carroll St.  
*Proposed by Abraham Pollack  
and Aaron Pollack*

Levin, Miss Stella  
Res. 836 Eastern Parkway

Loonin, Al  
Paper Unmarried  
Res. 268 East 53rd St.  
Bus. 92 Greene St.  
*Proposed by Irving Levine  
and William Rosenberg*

Mast, Irwin  
Attorney, Unmarried  
Res. 484 Vermont St.  
Bus. 66 Court St.

Meltzer, Benjamin  
Vending Machines Married  
Res. 436 Eastern Parkwa y  
Bus. 3903 Seventh Ave.  
*Proposed by Martin M. Goldman*

Molbert, Louis  
Furrier Unmarried  
Res. 456 Vermont St.  
Bus. 43 West 29th St.

Sommer, Miss Esther  
Res. 7 East 17th St.

Tepper, Miss Martha  
Res. 232 Corbin Place

Zucker, Harry  
Lawyer Unmarried  
Res. 901 Washington Ave.  
Bus. 16 Court St.  
*Proposed by Sam Schoenfeld*

Zucker, Abe  
Bond Broker Unmarried  
Res. 901 Washington Ave.  
Bus. 115 Broadway  
*Proposed by Sam Schoenfeld*

The following has applied for re-instatement in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

Geller, I. William  
Lawyer Married  
Res. 1320 - 50th St.  
Bus. 44 Court St.  
**EMANUEL GREENBERG,**  
*Chairman Membership Com.*

## CENTER RESTAURANT

The restaurant of the Center is open for members and their guests every Sunday from 12 noon to 5 P. M. Excellent full course dinners are served at \$1.00 per person; also a la carte. Members of the Center are invited to have their Sunday meals in our restaurant.

Due to the Testimonial Dinner to Rabbi Levinthal which will be held this Sunday evening, February 13th, the Restaurant will be closed on that day.

## SABBATH SERVICES

Kindling of candles at 5:11 P.M.

Friday evening services at 5:11.

Sabbath morning services, Parsha Tzaivah, will commence at 8:45 o'clock.

Class in Ein Yaakov under the leadership of Mr. Benjamin Hirsh at 4:15 P. M.

Mincha services at 5:10 o'clock.

## DAILY SERVICES

Morning services at 7 and 8 o'clock.

Mincha services at 5:10 o'clock.

## IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of our member

**Mrs. Morris Rosenfield**

of 354 New York Avenue who passed away on Friday, February 4th.

To the family of the deceased and to all her friends and relations the Brooklyn Jewish Center extends its deepest condolences.

## BASKETBALL GAME

Saturday Evening

Saturday Evening

February 19th

**B.J.C. vs. Elizabeth YMHA**

Admission 50 Cents

Dancing Following Game

## THE PRIDE THAT ENOBLER

Pride is not always laudable. But pride in the Brooklyn Jewish Center is worthy, because it is a beautiful institution — beautiful physically and beautiful in its spiritual influence.

Communicate this pride to those who do not yet know the Center, so that we may add them to our membership.

*Open All Year*



Miami Beach's Newest and Most Modern Hotel

## WALDORF TOWERS HOTEL

On the Ocean at 9th Street

EUROPEAN PLAN

Owner Management

Abraham Halperin

Robert B. Hyatt, Mgr.

### DR. LEVINTHAL'S FIRST SERMON

(Continued on page 7)

ple to devote money for building monuments to show their appreciation of great men, since the Jewish great men whose works were not universal could expect no distinction from non-Jews. However, those men whose works were so extensive and universal as to attract world-wide attention, even they, at their death, received no acknowledgment in the way of a monument because of race prejudice. Even when the person in question was a renegade to his religion, still, when he died, the prejudice lay in the fact that he was born a Jew, though he died otherwise. Heinrich Heine, whose German poetry, by the way, was translated from the original into other languages by Dr. Solomon Mandelkern, the departed in whose memory this

meeting is called, was one of those men who, at his death was not honored so much by the countries of Europe as to allow a monument to be erected in his memory, and a monument had to be brought from Europe into the United States and placed in Central Park in the City of New York . . .

This memorial service which we have instituted is not for the purpose of remembering these imperishable men, but to repeat their names, so that when we mention them we may bless them. It is our purpose to mention their names so that the public here assembled may be inspired by the great work which they have accomplished and follow their example, so that in this way the memories of these great men may be blessed . . .

**- FOR RENT -**



**6 ROOMS WITH 3 BATHS**

**985 PARK PLACE, BROOKLYN**

corner Brooklyn Avenue

**REASONABLE RENTAL — FINE LOCATION**

Hyman Aaron

—:—

Telephone: PResident 4-5561

*Hyman Spitz Inc.*  
MY ONLY STORE  
**FLORIST & FRUITERER**  
1685 PITKIN AVE  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

**WEDDING  
DECORATIONS  
OUR SPECIALTY**

**We Carry A Complete**

**Line of**

## Fruit Baskets

**for every occasion**



**THE BROOKLYN JEWISH**

**CENTER'S OFFICIAL**

**FLORIST**



TELEPHONE DICKENS 2-4000

## SELECTIONS FROM DR. LEVINTHAL'S SERMONS

(Continued from page 14)

that the ceremonies and rituals did for the Jew. Nay more, they even succeeded in creating for the Jew the illusion that he was living in his own land.

\* \* \*

There is a deep significance in the words of the Talmud concerning our Torah, our Judaism: "the beginning and the end thereof is *Gemilut Hasadim*—the performance of loving kindness." Judaism is not only ethical, but ethics constitutes its essence, its nature—"its beginning, its middle and its end." As the renowned philosopher Herman Cohen so well expressed it, "Ethics is the vital principle, the soul of Judaism." No wonder that when the great legalist, Rabbi Akiba, wants to state the most comprehensive rule in the Torah, he cites the classic verse: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; that Ben Azai, another legalist, goes yet further and finds an even broader principle in the words: "This is the book of the generations of Adam, in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him"—the recognition of the Divine in every human being; that Hillel, when about to summarize the whole Torah in one

phrase, said: "What is distasteful to thee do not unto others."

Love is grand and noble if it is based upon justice, not if it dispenses with justice. "What doth the Lord require of thee?" asks the Prophet, and he wisely answers: "To do justly and to love mercy! The reverse would shatter human society. The Rabbis conceive of God as sitting upon the throne of justice, and only after He is through viewing the world through the eyes of justice does He take His seat upon the throne of life and mercy. Ahad Ha Am, in one of his brilliant essays, shows the philosophic difference in the emphasis upon these two qualities: "If I practice love to that extent that when you smite me on the right cheek, I turn to you the left also, I am encouraging injustice—I, like you, am guilty of the fact that injustice is practiced!"

That is just the charge that is hurled against the predominant religion—that it taught submission in love to all injustice practised on earth, with the promise of bliss in another world in return for this submissiveness. Where injustice reigns love loses its bene-

Prompt Deliveries      N. Y. State L. 651  
Phone PResident 3-8265



**A. FELDMAN**  
**RETAIL WINE & LIQUOR STORE**

Imported and Domestic  
**WINES and LIQUORS**

**780 NOSTRAND AVE.**  
Bet. Sterling & St. Johns Pl., B'klyn. N. Y.

ficent quality. "Thou shalt surely reprove thy neighbor." Judaism demands, if his actions are contrary to the standards of right and justice. The ideal society will exist only when the words of the Prophet shall be fulfilled, when justice shall "well up as the waters and righteousness as a mighty stream."

# FLATBUSH MEMORIAL CHAPEL

**WM. SHERMAN AND SONS**  
**FUNERAL DIRECTORS**



**1283 Coney Island Avenue**  
**BROOKLYN, N. Y.**

Phone: ESplanade 7-7300



**BRANCH: 125 Varet Street**  
Phone—PUlaski 5-0167

**DIGNIFIED**

AND

**DISTINCTIVE**

**SERVICES**

**AT HOME**

OR

**CHAPEL**

A MESSAGE  
OF  
CONGRATULATION  
TO  
RABBI ISRAEL HERBERT LEVINTHAL  
*On His Fiftieth Birthday*

It is fitting that we, on this day, make known to you our deep devotion.

I speak for all your flock, when I, in this public way, ask you to receive our thanks and gratitude. For you have been as a beacon light by which we have charted our Course of Life; showing us the way of and the way to God. You have taught us, by word and by precept, of Love and of Beauty, of Truth and of Understanding, of Faith and of Tolerance.

In presenting these congratulations and heartfelt good wishes, we feel that it is indeed we who have been fortunate in having you as our leader . . . that we, at this time, should dedicate ourselves to those principles so well exemplified by your life. May we, Rabbi Levinthal, continue to have the great good fortune of having you as our spiritual leader for many, many years to come.

And you know that our sincerest wish is for your greatest happiness here with us.

HARRY MARCUS  
*Manager*

SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO.  
BEDFORD AVE. and BEVERLY ROAD  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

## TRIBUTES TO DR. LEVINTHAL

(Continued from page 11)

that I have done whatever was in my power to help promote the interests of my fellow Jews. And for all this I am sincerely grateful to you.

May God bless you and your family with health, happiness and contentment.

By HARRY A. HARRISON

**S**EVERAL weeks ago, President Roosevelt gave "the small business man" an opportunity to speak his mind on the problems confronting this nation.

During this week-end, on the pulpit, at the banquet to you by which this Center honors itself, and in the *Review*, you will be learning complimentary things about yourself, expressed by the great leaders of Jewry. I hope that you, too, will be interested to know what the "small man" of the community which you serve, thinks of you. We who have been "sitting at your feet" for these many years, hold you in very high esteem because you have really filled the role of leader as well as teacher and preacher.

Whenever you have thundered against injustices in the economic life of our nation, and have taken the leadership in the fight for social justice as demanded by our Bible, we have cheered inwardly, and among ourselves have said, "God bless our Rabbi for having the courage to brave the wrath that sometimes dares to stultify and stifle a religious leader's convictions."

Your untiring efforts in behalf of the upbuilding of Eretz Israel have made us feel that you were not rendering lip service to the two thousand year old prayers of the Jewish people for the redemption of the Land of our Forefathers. Of course a rabbi should help such a noble cause. But you have given of your time and strength in such unstinted and joyous measure that we have been glad to follow in the path you have pointed out to us.

Even when you have taken us to task for not being more zealous in bringing Jewish knowledge and learning into the lives and homes of our community, we have felt that we have deserved even more chastisement. For we are "the people of the Book"—and how dare we neglect the sacred heritage that justifies our existence as a people!

Finally—we salute you for your constant efforts to open the doors of our institution ever wider to those who

either cannot or will not join our membership ranks. Permitting our Center to be a "rich man's club" or an exclusive gathering place for a small minority, would have defeated the very purpose and ideals that should motivate a center.

And so, Rabbi Levinthal, we who delight in hearing your voice and grasping your hand in sincere friendship, wish you many more birthdays, surrounded by loved ones, and rejoicing in the certainty of Zion's redemption and mankind's return to sanity and peace.

## GREETINGS FROM THE OFFICERS OF THE CENTER

**O**N behalf of the membership of the Center we want to extend our hearty greetings to our esteemed and revered Rabbi, Dr. Israel Herbert Levinthal, on the occasion of his 50th birthday.

We are grateful to you for the years of splendid leadership and the glory which you have brought upon our institution. We pray that God may give you strength and health so that you may continue to add lustre to our institution and to all Israel.

Joseph M. Schwartz, President	
Henry Seinfeld	Hyman Aaron
1st Vice Pres.	2nd Vice Pres.
Moses Ginsberg	Max Herzfeld
Treasurer	Secretary

## GREETINGS FROM THE HEBREW SCHOOL AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

**T**HE teachers and students of the Brooklyn Jewish Center Hebrew School and Sunday School send their heartiest greetings to their spiritual leader, guide and principal, Rabbi Israel H. Levinthal, on the occasion of his 50th jubilee.

May he be blessed with many, many years to continue to be our inspiration and guide.

### Hebrew School Faculty

Mordecai Halevi, Head Teacher, Benjamin Hirsh, Emanuel M. Edelstein, Jean Serbin-Beder, Ray Edelstein, Berenica Grayzel, secretary, Rabbi Mordecai H. Lewittes, Principal, Sunday School.

## SISTERHOOD GREETINGS

**T**HE Sisterhood of the Brooklyn Jewish Center extends its sincere congratulations and best wishes to Rabbi Levinthal on his 50th birthday.

On this occasion we want to thank you, Rabbi Levinthal, for all that you have done for our organization and express the fervent hope that you and yours may be blessed with many years of health and happiness.

Mrs. Albert Witty, President	
Mrs. I. Lowenfeld	Mrs. M. Bernhardt
1st Vice Pres.	2nd Vice Pres.
Mrs. W. I. Siegel	Mrs. H. Rachmil
3rd Vice Pres.	Treasurer
Mrs. I. Wiener, Secretary	

## GREETINGS FROM CENTER ACADEMY HEBREW STAFF

**H**EARTIEST congratulations and best wishes to you Dr. Levinthal on your 50th birthday. May you continue to lead and inspire your community for many years to come.

Irene Bush  
Lillie Ruben Betty Unger

## THE MAKING OF A RABBI

(Continued from page 7)

Law." It brought high praise from lawyers and jurists as an important contribution to legal scholarship.

Strangely, or perhaps not strangely at all, this was the work which had led Dr. Levinthal to deviate from his chosen vocation, but was completed in the full glory of the knowledge that his service was right and needed, and that he was on the threshold of a career of even greater service.

## COMING FORUM LECTURES

FEB. 28—

**VICKY BAUM**

Famous Novelist, Author of  
Grand Hotel," etc.

MARCH 14—

**ANNA LOUISE STRONG**

Author and Foreign Correspondent

MARCH 21—

**RABBI SOLOMON GOLDMAN**

Brilliant Orator and Author

MARCH 28—

**ALEXANDER KERENSKY**

Leader of Russian Revolution  
Former Premier of Russia

# INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS MET AS COMPANY AIDS TROUBLED PROPERTY OWNERS

•

**B**UT the other day, before paying a small judgment obtained against one of our assureds,\* the Consolidated Taxpayers Mutual Insurance Company arranged for money owed as rent by the claimant-tenant, to be deducted and sent to the landlord. Our claim file had indicated that the tenant was behind in rent.

Each time an application is offered to the company, a check is made on prior rates to ascertain their correctness, resulting, in many instances, in a saving to our assureds.

There are often claims presented to a landlord which he desires his insurance company to fight, as he is convinced they are fraudulent—and settle when legitimate.

The assured's advice as to the best method of handling claimant-tenants is also sought.

This practice is but one of the examples of the close cooperation that exists between the Consolidated Taxpayers Mutual Insurance Company and its assureds.

\*Name and address gladly given upon request.

---

## CONSOLIDATED TAXPAYERS MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

COMMISSION PAID TO BROKERS

164 MONTAGUE STREET  
TRiangle 5-5300

HARRY STRONGIN  
President

•

*Saving with Assurance*

WE JOIN THE HOST OF  
RABBI ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL'S  
ADMIRERS IN CELEBRATING  
HIS FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY . . .  
THROUGH HIS WORK, AND  
THROUGH HIS FINE PERSON-  
ALITY, HE HAS BEEN AN IN-  
SPIRATION TO THE JEWISH  
COMMUNITY.

●

TREE-MARK SHOE COMPANY  
6 DELANCEY STREET NEW YORK CITY